City of Bloomington
Environmental Commission

The mission of the Environmental Commission is to advise the City of Bloomington on how its actions and policies may preserve and enhance the quality of Bloomington's environment, including the life-supporting processes that natural ecological systems provide to humans and other organisms.

MINUTES for the meeting, 21 May 2015
City Hall—McCloskey Room, 401 North Morton Street

1. Introductions
    Present: David Cohen, Alicia Reinersman, Chaim Julian, Mike Litwin, Kriste Lindberg, Diane Jung, Andy Marrs, Linda
        Thompson, Dedaimia Whitney, Dave Debikey
    Absent: Sean Gorman, Chad Roeder, David Parkhurst
    Guests: Andrea Jobe, Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS); Joe Shaw, Environmental Toxicologist

    The EC has two newly appointed commissioners: Andy Marrs and Chad Roeder.

2. Approval of minutes
    Unanimous approval of April EC minutes

3. Public comment

    Presentation: How a plan gets from the gleam in the developer's eye to a finished building
    (Tom Micuda, Planning and Transportation Director)

    Tom Micuda presented on the City's development process. A discussion of the steps in that process follows:

    1. Project idea
        When a developer gets a project idea, they contact the City's Planning and Transportation Department first.
        Developers come to the office with basic ideas, concept plans, or full plans to learn about zoning regulations
        (e.g., building height restrictions, space requirements, infrastructural concerns, etc.). Developers generally want
        to know if their projects are viable before investing time and money.

    2. Pre-application for development – 40 days from Planning Commission meeting
        The pre-application for development consists of proposing a development plan to the City and asking for formal
        feedback. This pre-application counts as a formal record of the plan proposal and enters the developer into a
        review process.

    3. Development Review Committee meeting – 33 days from Planning Commission meeting
        The Development Review Committee consists of an aggregation of governmental stakeholders in a given
        development project. This committee typically includes various City department representatives, but County
        department and Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) representatives often participate as well. These
        meetings facilitate idea interchanges among relevant government agencies, developers' groups, and Tom's
        planners. Input from these meetings often leads to project modifications rather than stoppages.

        By this stage, developers should start notifying neighbors about upcoming construction. Developers are required

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to notify neighbors within two properties of a given project site 21 days prior to Planning Commission meetings. Simultaneous to neighbor notification, developers should have Planning Commission work sessions to get input from the commissioners themselves.

4. Case-filing – 26 days from Planning Commission meeting

Planning subcommittee exposure occurs in this step. Developers bring modified or unmodified development plans to the City. Developers fill out applications, pay filing fees, and submit statements and informational documents. At this stage, the cases are presented to subcommittees (e.g., the Environmental, Bicycle and Pedestrian, and Historic Preservation Commissions).

5. Revisions deadline – 14 days from Planning Commission meeting

Two weeks before the Planning Commission meeting, developers resubmit any project revisions. Developers meet with subcommittees to discuss plan changes, and Linda assembles her report on behalf of recommendations. While Linda creates her report, Tom's office writes the staff report, and a final packet goes to the Planning Commission 4 to 5 days before the meeting. The reports indicate staff members' thoughts about recommendations, views from various boards and commissions, neighbors' feedback, etc.

At this stage, a project is ready for a hearing at a Planning Commission meeting. In these meetings, projects can get approved or denied. Prior to a decision, however, the commission often revisits plans at future meetings.

6. Steps following a decision

If projects get approved, developers must go through a permitting process prior to any construction. Developers take feedback gathered through the entire process and create final construction plans. The County reviews projects according to building codes, and the City evaluates plans for zoning concerns. The Fire Department examines project plans in terms of fire and safety. Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) reviews new rental property construction plans, and the Utilities Department assesses plans as well.

4. Committee reports & discussions
   A. Planning Committee & Sr. Environmental Planner (Linda)
      1. House at the corner of Covenanter and Brooks Drive
         a) The Environmental Commission Planning Committee (ECPC) might review this case due to a slight encroachment on the floodplain.
            - Someone plans to build a house with a circular driveway. One end of the driveway will be in the floodplain, which will require a variance.
            - The homebuilder will also ask for a variance to not build a sidewalk along Brooks drive since the street dead-ends and is wooded.
            - The house plan includes several green features like solar panels and permeable pavers.
      2. Downtown development on College Avenue south of 11th Street
         a) An old office building will be converted into 8 two-bedroom units.
            - The developer proposed to add a second story to the building.
            - Existing landscaping will likely be removed and redone.

   B. L4L Natural Landscaping (Diane)
      - Diane sent the redesigned L4L sign to the printer.
      - When the new signs become available, the EC will have another opportunity for a *Herald Times* article about L4L, expanding support and reach from Monroe County.
      - The Center for Sustainable Living and Habitat Stewards paid $500 toward a sign order. The Monroe County Stormwater Management Board will purchase $1000 of L4L signs for their own distribution efforts.
      - Diane will be working with two SPEA interns from the Monroe County Highway Engineering Department to make L4L flyers and a video public service announcement specific to Monroe County.
      - Diane will not be available (and no one else from the EC offered) to table at the Sustaining Nature and Your Land (SNAYL) Day event on June 6th.

- The Stormwater Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Monroe County Stormwater Waste Management District (MCSWMD) want Diane to attend their next meetings to discuss L4L and potential partnerships.

C. Tree Commission (Dedaimia)
Dedaimia did not attend the last Tree Commission meeting and had no report.

D. Eco Heroes (David Cohen)
- This year, Eco Heroes got 195 submissions, which was 85 submissions more than last year.
- 20 organizations sponsored the event this year, amounting to approximately $800 donated in gifts and checks.
  - Eco Heroes got fewer sponsors than last year. Next year, the EC should hold a brainstorming session, developing strategies to get additional sponsors. To get more sponsors in the future, each commissioner could persuade one business to contribute.
- Dave Rollo, City Council President, presented Eco Heroes awards this year rather than Mayor Mark Kruzan.

E. ERAC (David Parkhurst)
David Parkhurst was not present to report.

F. BCOS (Andrea)
- Andrea visited Atlanta and a saw good example of a rooftop garden atop a men's homeless shelter. These men maintain the rooftop garden.
- A speaker from Healthful Food for All attended the last BCOS meeting and discussed ways to make food more affordable for low income individuals.
  - At the end of Farmers' Markets, representatives from Healthful Food for All buy leftover food and donate it to local food pantries. This strategy helps feed disadvantaged individuals and cuts farmers' financial losses.
- The Monroe County Energy Challenge task for May is professionally servicing air conditioning units and have air conditioning units professionally serviced and to clean refrigerator coils. The estimated cost is $60 with a yearly savings of $60.
- The Energy Mobile design has been selected, representing the Monroe County Energy Challenge. This vehicle was funded by a grant from an energy company.
- Hoosier to Hoosier started going to IU's residence halls at end of academic school year to gather items left by students.
  - Duke Energy sent 90 volunteers on the first day to collect items, which sped up the collection process.
  - In the BCOS meeting, Jacqui Bauer provided some statistics about last year's Hoosier to Hoosier success: in 2014, volunteers logged 5,000 hours; 172 tons of items were diverted from landfill; and approximately 11,000 shoppers participated in the Hoosier to Hoosier sale, generating $24,000.
  - This year's Hoosier to Hoosier sale will occur in August.
- Andrea will be resigning from BCOS, effective July 1st.
- On June 8th, the chair, vice chair, and staff coordinator for the EC will meet with the co-chairs and staff coordinators of BCOS to discuss commission similarities and differences.

G. Curbside Recycling Committee (Dedaimia)
- The Curbside Recycling Committee elected Dave Debikey as Chair
- In the May 20th meeting, committee members identified stakeholders and discussed potential survey questions to guide project research.

5. Old business
A. Climate Action Plan (Alicia)
- The Climate Action Plan (CAP) has been renamed the Bloomington Environmental Action Plan (BEAP) to broaden its scope to include environmental concerns beyond climate change.
- Alicia met with her subcommittee on May 6th to discuss the current BEAP draft.
- The next subcommittee meeting will be on June 2nd and will focus on previous and current data collection efforts.

6. New business
A. Letter regarding PCB testing (Dedaimia on behalf of David Parkhurst)

- David sent a letter draft to a medical sciences faculty member at IU. This person said that if David cannot get funding for testing, they will help apply for grants.
- Each commissioner should read this letter to determine if they would be willing to sign it at the next EC meeting.
  - Commissioners should send revisions to David prior to the next meeting as well.

B. Approve committee list for 2015-16 Handbook
- Unanimously approved as a revision to the handbook
- Dedaimia is revising sections of the handbook one piece at a time
  - David Cohen is not on the Natural Landscaping Committee.
  - Alicia was on the Eco Heroes Committee.

7. Commissioner announcements
- Alicia found a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions calculator provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). She will forward the link to the commissioners.
- Chaim:
  - Future EC agendas should show Chaim attending Monroe County Solid Waste Management District (MCSWMD) board meetings rather than the MPO CAC meetings.
    - The MCSWMD is struggling to get funding for a materials recovery facility (MRF).
      - MCSWMD wanted to buy bailers initially, but the board did not act. The bailers are no longer available at the same price.
    - The next MCSWMD board meeting is on June 11th at 4:00pm in the Judge Nat U Hill III Meeting Room in the Courthouse.
  - The Mayor's office revised the Bring Your Bag Bloomington (BYBB) letter, and Environmental Commissioners signed the final draft in the meeting.
  - The Food Policy Council and Democracy for Monroe County want to hold meetings to further discuss BYBB.
- Diane: Bug Fest is on Saturday, June 27th. She will bring a volunteer sign-up sheet to the next EC meeting.
- Kriste and Diane are alternating months they attend County Environmental Commission meetings.

8. Adjournment

Meeting times
A. Environmental Commission: 18 June, 7:00 McCloskey Room, City Hall
B. Planning Committee: 3 June, 4:00 Lemon Room
C. Tree Commission: 17 June, 9:30 Bryan Park
D. BCOS meeting: 9 June, 6:00 McCloskey Room
E. County. Environ. Quality & Sus. Commission: 10 June, 5:30 Nat Hill Room, Courthouse
F. ERAC: 10 June, 4:30 RCA Park
G. MPO Citizens Advisory Committee: 27 May, 6:30 McCloskey Room